

Sensational OT Tip of the Month

Eye Tools

Do you know children that ...

1. Prefer to wear hats, hoods or sunglasses?
2. Prefer to work with lights out or dimmed?
3. Complain of tired eyes or rub their eyes, even though acuity has been checked?

These children might have **visual hypersensitivity**. Although some children thrive in environments with intense colors, lights and décor, other children's visual systems can be overwhelmed making it more difficult to learn.

Sensational Ideas for Visual Hypersensitivity

1. Give the child an opportunity to wear a hat with a brim or visor during the day to decrease the amount of light. (both inside and outside)
2. Set up a "dark work area" in the room. Look for a darkened area of the room that has less direct light, set up a work or listening station in the darker area as needed.
3. Turn out some (25%) of the lights in the classroom especially on bright days. Consider changing the types of lighting in the classroom. Fluorescent lights can flicker and make noise especially as bulbs get older.
4. De-clutter the classroom work spaces with less visual distractions.
5. Use a slant board with 15-25 degree angle when doing written work.
6. Try soft shades of paper rather than white as the contrast of black print on white paper can be intense and appear to make the writing move.

*Ask the occupational therapist at your school if you are interested in more information about **visual hypersensitivity**.*

Go to http://sensorysmarts.com/visual_sensitivity.html for more information. (COTI 2016)